
Utility Customer Service

Appropriation: \$ 2,336,471

The Utility Customer Service Division is responsible for reading water meters; providing monthly utility bills; responding to customer questions, concerns, requests and problems; and collection of delinquent customer accounts. The division is also charged with providing complete and accurate financial data to the Governing Body, the Finance Director, the utility enterprise divisions and the citizens of Santa Fe. The division was created through a reorganization by the Finance Director in the 2002/03 fiscal year; the function previously existed as a section within the Financial Management Division.

The Utility Customer Service Division consists of four sections: Meter Reading, Billing, Customer Service, and Collections. All four sections work as a cohesive team to assure accurate meter reading, billing and customer service for over 33,000 utility accounts. The division works closely with the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Divisions to ensure that services are properly rendered, customer problems are addressed, and that all divisions are kept abreast of problems or potential problems with their systems, procedures or processes.

2002/03 Operational Highlights:

- Worked with the Utility Billing Task Force on an extensive effort to clean up the billing database, thereby ensuring that all customers were being billed properly and that mailing addresses were kept updated and correct.
- Began development of a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for the division.
- Implemented a new collections module and began collecting on delinquent accounts.
- Initiated the first stages of the Remote Meter Reading System pilot program.
- Implemented new water rate changes.
- Began process of purchasing and developing the Customer Service Call Monitoring System and associated customer service training.

2003/04 Goals and Objectives:

- Implement ordinance changes including Release of Liability; new refuse, sewer and storm water rate changes; new or revised schedules of charges, fees and penalties; and new forms, including an improved utility bill format.
- Begin using Dataprint Utility Bill CDs to review and reprint customer bills.
- Create a utility billing dispute resolution procedure and assign a hearing officer.

- Continue development and begin implementation of the Remote Meter Reading System and Customer Service Call Monitoring System.
- Develop a meter replacement program and a leak repair revolving loan program.
- Work with the Water Services Division on the Unaccounted Water Audit.
- Contract the services of a collections agency to assist in the collection of amounts due from delinquent customer accounts.
- Work with the Public Utilities Department and related agencies and stakeholders on new utility rate recommendations.

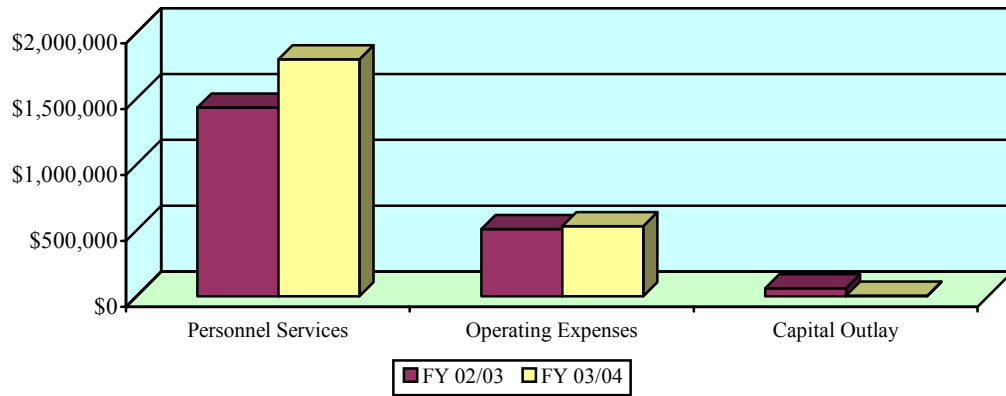
Budget Commentary:

The Division is supported by an appropriation of \$2,336,471 from the Utility Customer Service Fund (5205), which provides for meter reading activities, collection services for delinquent accounts, and printing services for refuse, sewer and ambulance billing statements.

A Division Director and a Utility Collections Investigator position were added in the FY 2003/04 budget process.

<u>POSITION/CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>FY 02/03 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY 03/04 BUDGET</u>
Utility Customer Service Division Director	0 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Account Specialist	1 – CLFT	2 – CLFT
Account Technician	9 – CLFT	8 – CLFT
Accounting Supervisor	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Administrative Manager	1 – CLFT	0 – CLFT
Clerk Typist	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Collections Manager	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Customer Service Manager	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Database Specialist	2 – CLFT	2 – CLFT
Lead Meter Reader	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Meter Reader	6 – CLFT	6 – CLFT
Meter Reading Supervisor	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Utilities Ombudsman	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Utility Collections Investigator	<u>0</u> – CLFT	<u>1</u> – CLFT
TOTAL:	26	27

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION



	FY 02/03 <u>REVISED</u>	FY 03/04 <u>APPROPRIATION</u>
Personnel Services	\$ 1,430,573	\$ 1,798,387
Operating Expenses	509,783	531,755
Capital Outlay	<u>62,100</u>	<u>6,329</u>
 TOTAL:	 \$ 2,002,456	 \$ 2,336,471